

Message Text

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17

ACTION EB-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSC-05

NSCE-00 IO-03 SIL-01 PM-03 SP-02 EA-06 EUR-08 USSS-00

SSO-00 INRE-00 RSC-01 /052 W
----- 093939

R 301118Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 316

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1736

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, TH

SUBJ: CIVAIR: AIRPORT LABOR PROBLEMS

REF : A. BANGKOK 1578; B. BANGKOK 534

1. AIR FRANCE AND LUFTHANSA HAVE RESUMED NORMAL FLIGHT OPERATIONS HERE IN WAKE OF CANCELLATION BY BOTH FIRMS OF CONTRACTS WITH WORLD TRAVEL SERVICE (WTS) FOR GROUND HANDLING SERVICES. HOWEVER, WORKERS STILL ON STRIKE AGAINST WTS OVER (1) WAGE ISSUES AND (2) DEMAND THAT WTS REINSTATE 40 WORKERS DISCHARGED ONE MONTH AGO. WTS OFFICIALS SAY FIRM MAY WITHDRAW FROM AIRPORT SERVICES OPERATIONS (WHICH COULD ENTAIL SEVERANCE PAYMENTS TO 450 WTS AIRPORT WORKERS).

2. COMMENT: DESPITE EXPLOSIVE LABOR CLIMATE AT AIRPORT, PANAM REP (LAYTON) WAS THIS MORNING PROCEEDING WITH PLANS TO DISCHARGE SIX STAFF AND OPERATIONS EMPLOYEES JAN 31,
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ONE A MEMBER OF UNION NEGOTIATING TEAM WHICH WON NEW TWO-

YEAR CONTRACT FROM PANAM JAN 9 (REF B). AFTER DISCUSSIONS AT EMBASSY, AND AT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WHERE OFFICIALS PREDICTED SUDDEN FIRINGS WOULD PRECIPITATE SHUTDOWN OF ALL PANAM OPERATIONS BY WORKERS, LAYTON HAS DECIDED TO POSTPONE DISCHARGING WORKERS UNTIL AFTER NEW GOVERNMENT IS FORMED. HOWEVER, INASMUCH AS LAYTON INSISTS HE IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM HEADQUARTERS TO DISCHARGE SIX EMPLOYEES ASAP AS PART OF WORLD-WIDE DRAWDOWN, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO SUGGEST TO PANAM NEW YORK THAT IN VIEW SENSITIVE BANGKOK AIRPORT LABOR CLIMATE IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO AT LEAST SPACE OUT THE PROJECTED DISMISSALS HERE. IN ADDITION, PANAM IS PLANNING WITHIN NEXT 30-60 DAYS TO DISCHARGE EN MASSE AND WITHOUT NOTICE ABOUT 90 OF ITS 200 GROUND SERVICES EMPLOYEES AT AIRPORT (THEN TO CONTRACT OUT MOST GROUND HANDLING OPERATIONS TO THAI INTERNATIONAL). STAFF REDUCTIONS ARE, OF COURSE, PERFECTLY LEGAL, AND PANAM INTENDS TO MAKE SEVERANCE PAYMENTS, BUT, GIVEN MOOD OF AIRPORT WORKERS, WE WILL BE KEEPING OUR FINGERS CROSSED IN REGARD TO DISMISSAL OF FIRST THE SIX AND THEN THE 90.

KINTNER

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